

Horticulture Tips

October 2004

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University

GARDEN TIPS FOR OCTOBER!

David Hillock

Turfgrass

- You can continue to replant or establish cool-season lawns like fescue.
- The mowing height for fescue should be lowered to approximately 2 ½ inches for fall and winter cutting.
- Broadleaf weeds like dandelions can be easily controlled during October (F-6421 & F-6601).
- Mow and neatly edge warm-season lawns before killing frost.

Ornamentals

- Plant cool-season annuals like pansies, ornamental cabbage or kale, snapdragons and dusty miller when temperatures begin to cool.
- Begin planting spring-flowering bulbs like tulips, hyacinths, crocus and daffodils.
- Good companion plants for bulbs are evergreen ground covers such as ajuga, vinca, English ivy, alysium, potentilla, moneywort, thrift, phlox, oxalis and leadwort.
- Peonies, daylilies, and other spring-flowering perennials should be divided or planted now.
- Dig and store tender perennials like cannas, dahlias, and caladiums in a cool, dry location.
- Purchase trees from nurseries and garden centers at this time to select the fall color you prefer.
- Many perennials can be planted at this time and the selection is quite nice.
- Plant fall mums and asters and keep them watered during dry conditions. Don't crowd since they take a couple of years to reach maturity.
- Plant container-grown trees and shrubs this month.
- Check and treat houseplants for insect pests before bringing them indoors and repot rootbound plants.

Fruits & Vegetables

- Dig sweet potatoes and harvest pumpkins and winter squash.
- Remove green fruit from tomato plants when frost threatens.
- Harvest Oriental persimmons and pawpaws as they begin to change color.
- There is still time to plant radishes and mustard in the fall garden.
- Use a cold frame device to plant spinach, lettuce and various other cool-season crops for production most of the winter.
- Plant cool-season cover crops like Austrian winter peas, wheat, clover, and rye in otherwise fallow garden plots.

- Remove all debris from the garden to prevent overwintering of various garden pests.
- Start new planting bed preparations now with plenty of organic matter.

Water Gardens

- Take tropical water garden plants indoors when water temperatures near 50 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Close the water garden for the winter by placing hardy plants in the deeper areas of the pool. Stop feeding the fish.
- Cover water gardens with bird netting to catch dropping leaves during the winter months.

Fall - A Good Time to Control Broadleaf Weeds

David Hillock

Summer temperatures make it too risky to use the broadleaf postemergence herbicides due to the volatility and threat of drift, which could then damage desirable plants in the landscape. However, the cooler daytime temperatures associated with fall make it is an excellent time to think again about controlling broadleaf weeds in the yard. Dandelion and other broadleaf weeds are easily controlled with post emergence herbicides such as those that contain a Trimec solution or other 2, 4-D formula. Remember to spray early in the day when winds are low and before temperatures begin to get too warm. Care should be used when applying these herbicides around desirable landscape plants. Do not over apply especially around tree and shrub roots. Spot spray when possible as it is not necessary to do a blanket cover spray when only few weeds actually exist in the yard. Spraying young weeds as they first appear this fall will be more effective than waiting until the foliage is more mature. Mature foliage resists the herbicide more easily than the younger shoots. Always read and follow label directions!!

Oklahoma State Pecan Show 2004

Becky Carroll

This year looks to be a bumper crop for pecans. Be sure to get the word out to everyone to enter their best pecans in the state show this year. There will not be any qualifying regional or district pecan shows this year. However, some county/area shows will be held at the discretion of the County Extension Educator. Growers are encouraged to participate in county shows if available. Winning entries from county shows will be sent to the state show. If no county/area show is available, growers may enter pecans directly by sending samples to Becky Carroll, 360 Ag Hall, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078. Samples should arrive by January 10, 2005.

Samples should be entered in a sealed plastic or paper bag. Label the bag on the outside and place a label inside the bag. Information should include exhibitor's name and address, county, and type of pecan entered. Be sure to follow the guidelines that are listed below before sending entries.

A few helpful hints: Take the time to select pecans that are all the same cultivar, or same size and shape natives – don't send mixed pecans. Select uniform, clean, uncracked pecans. Presentation can make the difference between two very similar samples. Make sure to send two pounds of pecans in a labeled and sealed bag.

General Rules and Guidelines

- All entries must be grown in Oklahoma during the current season.
- Each entry shall consist of two pounds of nuts.
- Entries deemed unworthy by the judges will not compete for awards.
- Label each entry as to exhibitor's name, address and cultivar of nuts. If more than one native (seedling) pecan exhibit is made, identify the nuts from separate trees by numbers. Only one exhibit of each cultivar or native tree may be entered by one individual.
- Each entry will compete in one of the following 28 classes:

1. Apache	12. Maramec	23. Success
2. Barton	13. Mohawk	24. Western
3. Burkett	14. Pawnee	25. Wichita
4. Cheyenne	15. Peruque	26. Other Cultivars
5. Choctaw	16. SanSaba Improved	27. Large-Native
6. Comanche	17. Schley (eastern)	(seedling)
7. Graking	18. Shawnee	28. Small-Native
8. Gratex	19. Shoshoni	(seedling)
9. Kanza	20. Sioux	
10. Kiowa	21. Squirrels Delight	
11. Mahan	22. Stuart	
- Each grower is allowed to participate at one county show of his or her choice.
- Each grower is allowed to enter one entry in each show class with the exception of Class 26 (Other Cultivars), Class 27 (Large-seedling) and Class 28 (Small- seedling).
- Each grower may enter one entry from each native (seedling) tree.
- Entries should be shipped or mailed to arrive at the show at least one day prior to the deadline.
- County pecan shows will not be affected by these rules and procedures.
- Only first and second place winners in each class of each county/area show will be eligible to compete in the State Pecan Show. Following each county show, eligible entries will be placed in cold storage, and judged before the Oklahoma Pecan Growers

Annual Meeting. At that time, the winning entries will be displayed with awards and recognitions. All entries will become the property of the OPGA.

- First and second place winners in each class at the State Pecan Show will receive ribbons.
- State Pecan Show Special Awards – Trophies will be awarded for the largest pecan entry, the entry having the highest kernel percentage, the champion native and the best entry of the show.
- If a qualifying show is not available, growers may submit entries in accordance with these guidelines directly to the State Show. Entries in the state show must be received by January 10, 2005 at the following address:

Oklahoma State University
Department of Horticulture & LA
Attn: Becky Carroll
360 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

Plants with Fall Color

David Hillock

There are many plants available for the landscape that can exhibit fabulous fall colors, from herbaceous perennials and ground covers to shrubs and trees. Fall colors appear when the green chlorophyll fades from the plant's leaves due to shorter days and cooler temperatures and reveal other pigments. However, many factors influence the quality and intensity of fall color for any given year. Some of the plants listed below have specific species and/or cultivars that are known for reliable and markedly vivid fall color. When fall color is the priority trait desired, it is advisable to purchase the plant in the fall when such colors can be viewed and critiqued before purchase.

Trees

- Amur maple
- Bald cypress
- Caddo sugar maple
- Chinese pistache
- Crape myrtle
- Flowering dogwood
- Ginkgo
- River birch
- Sweetgum
- Washington hawthorn
- Yellowwood

Shrubs

- Chokecherry
- Cotoneasters
- Fothergilla
- Japanese barberries
- Ninebark
- Oakleaf hydrangea
- Smoketree
- Spireas
- Sumacs
- Summersweet
- Viburnums (certain species)
- Virginia Sweetspire
- Winged euonymus (burning bush)

Perennials, Ground covers, & Vines

- Autumn Joy and other sedums
- Boston ivy
- Creeping mahonia
- Nandina or Heavenly bamboo
- Ornamental grasses
- Virginia creeper
- Wintercreeper

Small Trees for Oklahoma

Many people focus on and seek out trees for shade, often forgetting that smaller trees (typically growing less than 20' tall) also offer value to the landscape. Many of the smaller trees provide aesthetical characteristics such as interesting flowers and decorative bark or fruit. Another advantage to small trees is their "utilitarian" value; meaning they can often be planted under power lines without the potential of interfering years down the road, or on occasion can be planted in containers. A few small trees that grow well in Oklahoma include the following:

Redbuds (*Cercis* spp.)

- Oklahoma redbud (*Cercis canadensis* var. *texensis* 'Oklahoma') – matures to about 10-12' tall; very dark, glossy green, undulating or wavy leaf
- Mexican redbud (*Cercis mexicana*) – thick wavy leaves, dark purple flowers, small in OK to 15'
- Weeping types – Covey and others

Smoketree (*Cotinus coggygia*)

- Grow purple or green-leaf types; smoke-like flowers in early summer; gnarled/interesting growth habit at maturity

Carolina buckthorn (*Rhamnus caroliniana*)

- Native tree to 12-15' in cultivation; glossy, pest-free leaves; yellow to red fall color; red to black fruits that persist; limited commercial availability

Fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)

- Native shrub to small tree; grow for white spring flowers; yellow fall color; 12-15' tall; also consider Chinese fringetree (*C. retusus*)

Tecumseh Compact river birch (*Betula nigra* Tecumseh Compact™)

- 10-15' selection; exfoliating bark, pest-free leaves and yellow fall color; prune up early to make into a tree; Fox Valley™ is another dwarf form to look for

Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.)

- Hawthorns are not without problems such as foliar diseases and thorns, however, they offer spectacular fruit displays into winter and sometimes good fall color; Washington hawthorn (*C. phaenopyrum*) and others are commercially available

Winterberry euonymus (*Euonymus bunganus*)

- Many can be grown in Oklahoma relatively scale-free; has attractive bark, fairly pest-free leaves, yellow fall color and showy fruits

Heptacodium (*Heptacodium miconioides*)

- If unpruned will often grow as a shrub; year round interest with showy bark, white flowers and pink sepals in Oct-Nov; slowly becoming more available ;15' at maturity

Holly (*Ilex* spp.)

- Deciduous holly (*I. decidua*)
- Foster holly (*I. x attenuata* 'Fosteri') – different types exist under this cross/selection
- Yaupon holly (*I. vomitoria*) – many cultivars with tremendous variation in height, habit, etc. – consider 'Pendula'

Wireless zelkova (*Zelkova serrata* Wireless™)

- Bred to stay under power lines; will be broad but not as tall as traditional zelkova; to approximately 20-25'

Fall Farm-Fest

David Hillock

The hands-on skills it took to run an Oklahoma farm in days gone by will once again be demonstrated at Fall Farm-Fest, Saturday, October 9 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Overstreet-Kerr Historical Farm located on highway 59 about ten miles south of Sallisaw, OK.

Visitors can see heritage farm breeds, tour the historical home, and watch "pioneers" cook sorghum syrup. Other activities include demonstrations of Dutch oven cooking, making butter, soap, and sauerkraut, quilting, spinning cotton, weaving, flint knapping, woodcarving, and blacksmithing,

The annual festival is noted for its friendly, down-home atmosphere, giving visitors plenty of opportunities to visit with exhibitors.

A display of restored John Deere antique farm equipment donated largely by people in southeastern Oklahoma will be showcased.

Hay making equipment along with planters and cultivators show visitors how farming has changed from 1830-1930. Members of the Arkansas Valley Antique Tractor Club will show visitors how some of the equipment was once used.

Sorghum was once a staple of the farm kitchen, and neighbors gathered together each fall to press the sorghum cane and cook the juice. This family atmosphere is recreated at Farm-Fest. The sorghum cane, grown nearby, will be pressed in a mill powered by draft animals. Then a crew of volunteer cooks will cook the sorghum in a traditional copper pan over a wood fire.

Cooking the sorghum juice to the right consistency, with the right taste, is an art. The crew must tend the fire, skim the froth, and keep the juice boiling at just the right rate as the green juice is slowly transformed into thick, sweet, brown syrup.

Visitors may also view the farm's heritage breeds of livestock, such as the Pineywoods cow and the Choctaw pony.

Also scheduled to be on display will be beautiful heirloom varieties of turkeys. These varieties have become rare and are in danger of extinction. For example, fewer than 5,000 Bourbon Reds, a deep red bird with black markings, which originated in the United States are left worldwide.

The Overstreets were prosperous farmers and the elegant fourteen-room home they completed in 1895 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other farm buildings such as the barn, chicken house, potato house and smoke house will also be open to visitors. The house offers handicapped access.

Admission to Farm-Fest is five dollars for adults and three dollars for school-age youth, under six free. Groups of ten or more seniors can get in for \$3 each. Groups should contact the farm in advance at 918.966.3396.

Proceeds support free educational programs for school children at the farm. For more information contact Jeremy Henson at 918.966.3396 or at okhfarm@crosstel.net. To learn more about the historical farm, visit www.kerrcenter.com

Upcoming Horticulture Events

Nursery/Greenhouse Trade Show and Convention

October 7-9, 2004

Cox Convention Center, Oklahoma City

For more information, contact Wendy Gerdes at ohic@ionet.net or 405-942-5276.

Tree Care Issues Conference

November 3, 2004

OSU Botanical Gardens Educational Building, Stillwater

24th Annual Arkansas/Oklahoma Horticulture Industries Show

"Safe and Secure Food Begins on the Farm"

January 14-15, 2005

Fort Smith, Arkansas – Holiday Inn Civic Center

For more information contact Donna Dollins at donna.dollins@okstate.edu or 405-744-6460.

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.